

HEALTH

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CREWKERNE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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ANNUAL REPORT

of

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

For the Year ended 31st December, 1949.

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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER:-

Medical Officer of Health.

Dr. A. M. McCall,  
M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

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TO the Chairman and Councillors of the Crewkerne Urban District.

Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my report for the year 1949.

This is the first complete year I have been with you in Crewkerne, and I have taken the opportunity to alter the form of my report. As you will see I have kept the tables and statistics apart as far as possible from the report. I have done this in the hope my report will be more readable and will have a wider appeal.

I would like to see these annual reports read by the public of Crewkerne. They would then know a great deal more of what is done for them by their Council, and I trust develop health consciousness.

I am,

Mr Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

*A. J. C. Tall*

Medical Officer of Health.



## SECTION A.

### Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

#### Population.

The Registrar-General gives the estimated population of Crewkerne for mid-year 1949 as 4,120.

#### Birth Rate.

The Birth Rate in Crewkerne in the last few years has increased - the same is true in the Country as a whole. This is due to the fact that the people getting married have been younger. At 17.4 per 1,000 it compares favourably with 16.7 for England and Wales.

#### Death Rate.

The chief causes of death are shown in Appendix A. Table 2.

Heart disease has been the greatest cause of death. Taken together with other diseases of circulation it caused over a third of all deaths. Cancer was second only to heart disease. Other causes of death included, Kidney disease, congenital malformation, and Road accidents. The rate of 12.1 is slightly higher than 11.7 per 1,000 for England and Wales.

#### Infant Mortality.

Only one death occurred due to a congenital malformation.

There was one still birth.

#### Maternal Mortality.

There were no cases of maternal mortality during the year.

#### Social Conditions.

Your social services remain unchanged since last year.

Unemployment remained at a very low level throughout the year.

## SECTION B.

### General Provisions of Health Services of Area.

Since the National Health Service Act came into existence many of the services previously run locally have become the responsibility of the Local Health Authority, that is, the County Council. We in Somerset are fortunate in the degree of delegation of authority allowed by the County Medical Officer of Health. As a result, I, as your representative, am still responsible for the daily administration of the welfare and school services.

#### Infant Welfare Clinics.

These are held every second and fourth Tuesday at the Methodist Hall, South Street. During the year 1949 1,118 attended the clinics. This is a

considerable increase on last year. Incidentally, these attendances are going up and in the last four months of the year despite the winter weather the average number attending has been higher than ever before. The children are weighed regularly and the nurses are in attendance to advise. Every child is seen by the Doctor on their first attendance and subsequently as necessary. There were 185 consultations with the Doctor in 1949. No treatment is given, but in cases where it is indicated, the child is referred to the family Doctor, usually by letter. The willing co-operation of the Private Practitioners in Crewkerne has greatly enhanced the value of this service. Great credit for this satisfactory state of affairs is due to the Secretary, Mrs Smith, the District Nurses and the Committee - to whom I am very grateful.

#### Immunisation.

This is carried out at the Welfare clinic. Combined vaccine for use against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough is now available and despite the fact that it requires three injections at monthly intervals 68 children were immunised during the year.

#### Vaccination.

Since the new Act ceased to make vaccination compulsory there has been a complete lack of interest. However, I hope to be able to give a more satisfactory report next year. Vaccination is now available at the clinic.

#### Health Visiting.

The District Nurses do the Health Visiting in Crewkerne and their efforts have been a considerable factor in improving the attendances at the clinics, and in following up defects found in children at the school medical inspections.

#### Maternity Services.

At present this work is carried out by the District Nurses and when needed the Private Practitioners are consulted. A limited number of beds are available for necessitous cases in Crewkerne Hospital and in this respect we are more fortunate than some of our neighbours. Neither Ante-natal nor Post-natal clinics are held in Crewkerne, but I hope these will be provided by the County when the new clinic premises are ready.

#### Mass Radiography.

We were fortunate in being able to secure a visit from the Unit at Bristol. Despite very short time for publicity 424 people attended. Of these 15 were recalled. Only 5 were found to have Tuberculosis, 2 active and 3 inactive cases. A full analysis is shown in Appendix B. Table 1. I hope this will be an annual visit in the future.



#### Home Help Service.

The County Home Help Service, so valuable in times of confinement illness or old age is well established in this Area and has worked smoothly when required.

#### School Medical Service.

This Service is organised by the County Education Committee. During the year I have visited every school in Crewkerne twice and at these inspections 423 have been examined, 84 have been immunised. Details are given in Appendix B Table 2.

#### Dental Service.

Somerset like all other Health Authorities have been finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their Dental services owing to staff resignations since 1948. Crewkerne has been particularly unfortunate and only emergency treatment was available for the children here.

I hope to report a considerable improvement when the new Dental clinic is completed.

#### Ophthalmic Services.

The County Service available for children of all ages has been working extremely well. All cases referred from the school medical inspections are seen promptly and then regularly as necessary. We have experienced delays in obtaining glasses, but this is a widespread difficulty and our local Optician has always given fullest co-operation to ensure that the childrens' needs are met with as little delay as possible.

#### Ambulance Service.

The Crewkerne Ambulance was used on 140 occasions including 16 maternity cases, covering a mileage of 3,500. We are fortunate in having so capable and energetic an Officer as Mr Sutton in charge of this Service.

#### Red Cross Society.

I wish to acknowledge the help this Society gave in the loan of equipment on various occasions during the year.

## SECTION C.

### Prevalence of, and Control over Infectious Diseases and Other Diseases.

A summary of the notifications will be found in Appendix C Table 1.

The town has been remarkably free from infectious disease during 1949. Measles showed the highest incidence, we have not had many cases of measles in Crowkerne for some years now, and a large number of young children have grown who are susceptible. It was surprising and fortunate that more cases did not occur.

The seven cases of Scarlet Fever were all mild infections.

I am pleased to report that we were again free from Infantile Paralysis.

There were no cases of Diphtheria, due no doubt to the immunisation which has been carried out during recent years.

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## SECTION D.

### Environmental Health Services.

#### (a) Sanitary Circumstances.

#### Climatic Conditions.

The year will be remembered mainly for the extremely dry summer. Rainfall was considerably below normal.

#### Water Supply.

The summer months were critical times over most of the Country and water supplies were very low. In the early months of the year in the absence of a Surveyor, the Clerk and Foreman directed an extensive re-construction and re-piping of the springs at Wayford. Later in the year we all benefitted considerably from **this work.**

Apart from minor restrictions such as forbidding the use of a hose for gardens and car washing, we were able to give a full supply throughout the summer. This was very satisfactory indeed.

Samples of the water were taken monthly throughout the year and were satisfactory.

#### Drainage and Sewerage.

I regret to report that no action was taken in the year to provide a new sewage system.

#### Public Cleansing.

Weekly removal of refuse was carried out in the town.

Early in the year the need of householders to provide a standard



type of dustbin was well publicised. The response was encouraging and now the vast majority use dustbins covered with a well fitting lid.

The Council took delivery of a new refuse carrier which enabled the operators to carry out their duties more efficiently.

The streets despite increasing traffic were kept in a creditable condition.

#### Rats and Mice Destruction.

There was a considerable improvement in the standard of this work throughout the year.

Routine treatments were carried out on the Council properties. Private properties were dealt with and in addition a survey of the whole town was commenced. Test baiting of sewers was done regularly.

#### Swimming Bath.

I regret to report that it was impossible to open the bath at Vincy Bridge owing to unsatisfactory bacteriological reports on the water.

The bath at the Grammar School was satisfactory, but unfortunately is not available to other children in the town.

#### Factories Act.

The statistics will be found in Appendix D. Table 1.

#### (b) Housing.

##### Statistics.

The Council were without a Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector throughout the year, with the result that very little was done. This is most regrettable and the work accumulated in an alarming fashion. See Appendix D table 2.

##### Post War Housing.

The number of houses completed during the year was six. This makes a total of seventy-six since the war. There are one hundred and fifty on the waiting list. This shows some progress, but we have a great deal to do.

There has still been no effort to tackle the problem of housing the aged. I stressed the urgency of this problem in last years' report.

#### (c) Inspection and Supervision of Food.

##### Milk Supply.

All the retailers were registered and licences granted. Sampling was not done.

##### Food.

The Slaughter house was inspected by myself on several occasions

and some improvements have been carried out there. The inspection of meat was kindly undertaken by the Sanitary Inspectors of Chard Rural District Council, and I am indebted to them.

We did little sampling of food, but one is worth noting.

During the Annual Fair a sample of Candy Floss was sent for examination. It was found to be absolutely sterile. This was extremely suprising considering the circumstances in which it was made and sold at the side of the A 30 route, and surrounded by a considerable crowd.

#### APPENDIX A. TABLE 1.

Crowkerne 1949.

##### BIRTH RATE.

		M.	F
<u>Live Births.</u>	<u>Total</u>	42.	29.
	Legitimate.	42.	28.
	Illegitimate.	-	1.
<u>Still Births.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	-	1.
	Legitimate.	-	1.
	Illegitimate.	-	-
<u>Deaths of Infants under 1 year.</u>	<u>Total.</u>	-	1.
	Legitimate.	-	1.
	Illegitimate.	-	-

Birth Rate, 17.4 per 1,000.

#### APPENDIX A. TABLE 2.

Crowkerne 1949.

##### TABLE OF DEATHS.

	Total.	M	F
	50.	21.	29.
<u>Causes of Death.</u>			
Heart Disease.	13.	8.	5.
Other diseases of Circulatory System.	6.	2.	4.
Cancer. (all forms)	11.	3.	8.
Respiratory Disease.	8.	4.	4.
Nephritis.	1.	-	1.
Congenital Malformation.	1.	1.	-
Road Traffic.	1.	1.	-
Other violent causes.	1.	1.	-
All other causes.	7.	1.	6.

Death Rate 12.1 per 1,000.

APPENDIX B. TABLE 1.

Mass Radiography Unit.

Survey at Crewkerne.		December 1949.		
		M.	F.	Total.
<u>Miniature Films.</u>		226.	198.	424.
<u>Large Films.</u>	Normal.	2.	-	2.
	Did not attend.	2.	-	2.
	Significant cases.	5.	6.	11.
	Total recalled.	9.	6.	15.
<u>Clinical Examinations.</u>		2.	2.	4.

ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANT CASES.

Non-Tuberculous Conditions.

Abnormality bony Thorax.	1.	-	1.
Pneumoconiosis	1.	-	1.
Bronchiectasis.	1.	-	1.
Interlobar pleurisy.	1.	-	1.
Chronic Bronchitis.	-	1.	1.
Pleural thickening.	-	1.	1.
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TOTAL.	4.	2.	6.

SIGNIFICANT CASES.

	Under 15.	15/ 24.	25/ 34.	35/ 44.	45/ 59.	60 & over.	Previously Total detected.
<u>Active Tuberculosis.</u>							
M.							-
F.	-	-	1.	1.	-	-	2.
<u>Inactive Tuberculosis.</u>							
M.	1.	-	-	-	-	-	1.
F.	-	1.	1.	-	-	-	2.
Total.	1.	1.	2.	1.	-	-	5.

APPENDIX B. TABLE 2.

SCHOOLS.

Name of School.	No of Children examined.	No. Immunised.
Crewkerne Infants.	65.	-
" "	46.	-
Crewkerne Junior Girls.	31.	-
" " "	31.	-
Crewkerne Junior Boys.	30.	-
" " "	20.	-
Crewkerne Secondary Modern.	53.	-
" " "	26.	-
Crewkerne Grammar.	63.	84.
" "	58.	-
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TOTAL.	423.	84.

APPENDIX C. TABLE 1.

Infectious Diseases

Whooping Cough.	Nil.
Scarlet Fever.	7.
Measles.	11.
Puerperal Pyrexia.	1.
Erysipelas.	1.
Total.	<u>20</u>

Analysis of Cases Notified.

	-1.	1-2.	2-3.	3-4.	4-5.	5-10.	10-15.	15-20.	20-35.	35-45.	45-65.	65 +.
Scarlet Fever.				1.		5.	1.					
Measles.	2.	1.	1.	1.		6.						
Puerperal Pyrexia.									1.			
Erysipelas.									1.			

TUBERCULOSIS.

<u>Age Group.</u>	<u>Respiratory.</u>		<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>	
	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
-1.				
1-5.				
5-15.				
15-25.	1.			
25-35.				
35-45.		1.		
45-55.				
55-65.				
65 +.				
Total.	1.	1.	-	-

Both these cases were transfers from other Areas.

APPENDIX D. TABLE 1.

Factories Act 1937.

1. Inspections for the purpose of provisions as to Health (including inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector.)

<u>Premises.</u>	<u>Number on Register.</u>	<u>Inspections.</u>	<u>Written Notices.</u>	<u>Occupiers Prosecuted.</u>
Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	55.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Cases in which defects were found.		Nil.		

OUTWORK.

No. of Outworkers in August List required by Section 110.	144 (making wearing apparel)
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APPENDIX D. TABLE 2.

Housing Inspections.

1.	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for Housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts) . . . . .	7.
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose. . . . .	7.
2.	(a)	Number of houses (included under sub-head (1) above which were inspected and recorded under H.Con. Reg. 1925 & 1932.	Nil.
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose.	Nil.
	(c)	Number of houses in which no action was found necessary.	Nil.
3.		Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.	3.
4.		Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation.	4.

Housing Action.

(a)	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers.	2.
(b)	Number of houses demolished voluntarily or in consequence of informal action.	2.

Action under Statutory Powers during the year.

Proceedings under Section 9,10, & 16 of the Housing Act 1936. Nil.

Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

Proceedings under Section 11,13, and 26 of the Housing Act 1936. Nil.

Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act. Nil.

Housing Act 1936 --- Over-crowding. Nil.

